

## HONORING LONDON MONTGOMERY

**HON. SAM GRAVES**

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, December 10, 2014*

Mr. GRAVES of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Landon Montgomery. Landon is a very special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 714, and earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Landon has been very active with his troop, participating in many scout activities. Over the many years Landon has been involved with scouting, he has not only earned numerous merit badges, but also the respect of his family, peers, and community. Most notably, Landon contributed to his community through his Eagle Scout project.

Mr. Speaker, I ask you to join me in commending Landon Montgomery for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE  
HONORABLE CALVIN SMYRE**HON. SANFORD D. BISHOP, JR.**

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, December 10, 2014*

Mr. BISHOP of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a distinguished public servant, principled business leader and dear friend to my wife, Vivian and me, Georgia State Representative Calvin Smyre. Representative Smyre will be retiring this month as Executive Vice President of Corporate External Affairs of Synovus, a financial services company based in Columbus, Georgia.

Representative Smyre earned a degree in Business Administration from Fort Valley State University in Fort Valley, Georgia. In 1974, he was elected to the Georgia House of Representatives as its youngest member at 27 years of age. I was honored to have served with Rep. Smyre during my own tenure in the Georgia General Assembly, and I feel blessed to have gained a dear friend.

A 40-year legislative veteran, Rep. Smyre has built a repertoire of legislative accomplishments. He currently serves on the Appropriations Committee and the Rules Committee and is Chairman Emeritus of the House Democratic Caucus. In 1983, Rep. Smyre transcended racial barriers when Governor Joe Frank Harris appointed him as Administration Floor Leader, making Rep. Smyre the first African American in history to hold this position. In 1985, he was elected to the Democratic National Committee, becoming the first African-American elected official from Georgia to serve on the Committee. Then, in 2001, Rep. Smyre made history again when Governor Roy Barnes named him Chairman of the Democratic Party of Georgia, making Rep. Smyre the first African American to chair the state Democratic Party. Nationally, Rep. Smyre is President Emeritus of the National Black Caucus of State Legislators (NBCSL) and the immediate Past President of the NBCSL Foundation.

In addition to his legislative achievements, Rep. Smyre has also built a successful business career. In 1976, he joined Columbus Bank & Trust Company, the Columbus-based division of Synovus, as a Manager Trainee. Two years later, he was promoted to Assistant Vice President and Marketing Officer. He served as Assistant Vice President and Vice President of Corporate Administration for Synovus from 1984 to 1990 and as Vice President of Corporate Affairs from 1992 to 1994. In 1996, Rep. Smyre was named Senior Vice President and Assistant to the Chairman for Community Affairs. In 1999, he was promoted to Executive Vice President and has served in this position ever since. In addition, he has the role of Synovus representative on the Financial Services Roundtable, the leading advocacy organization for the financial industry headquartered in Washington, D.C.

As former Chairman and CEO of the Synovus Foundation, the organization that directs corporate and philanthropic gifts from Synovus, Rep. Smyre has been one of the driving forces in ensuring that the company creates goodwill in the communities that it serves. Synovus boasts approximately \$26 billion in assets and provides commercial and retail banking and investment services to consumers in the southeast United States. The company has been named one of Fortune magazine's "100 Best Companies to Work For" in America multiple times.

Although his business career and legislative duties have kept him busy, Rep. Smyre still finds the time to serve his community in various other capacities. He has held leadership and membership positions on numerous boards, foundations and organizations. He is a devoted Christian and has been a member of Greater Ward Chapel A.M.E. Church for over fifty years.

Nelson Mandela once said, "For to be free is not merely to cast off one's chains, but to live in a way that respects and enhances the freedom of others." Rep. Smyre embodies this statement thoroughly, for in light of his great personal success, he continues to fight to ensure that every voice is respected and heard.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me, my wife Vivian, and the Columbus, Georgia community in honoring Georgia State Representative Calvin Smyre for his decades of leadership at Synovus. While he leaves behind a great legacy at Synovus, we have certainly not seen the last of Rep. Smyre. He will continue to represent his constituents in the state legislature and he will continue to serve the Columbus community with integrity and distinction.

HONORING THE HEROIC SERVICE  
AND SACRIFICE OF ABDUL-  
RAHMAN PETER EDWARD  
KASSIG**HON. SUSAN W. BROOKS**

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, December 10, 2014*

Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of the service and sacrifice of Abdul-Rahman Peter Edward Kassig. Tragically before his time, Kassig was taken from this earth by the hands of the terrorist group ISIL. He will forever be remembered as a self-

less man who gave his life in service to those who needed it most. I also honor his loving and dedicated parents, Ed and Paula Kassig, who live in Indianapolis.

Although he was only 26 at the time of his death, Abdul-Rahman Peter Kassig dedicated his entire adult life to serving others. Born and raised in Indianapolis, Kassig graduated from North Central High School in 2006. Upon his graduation, Kassig served as a soldier in the U.S. Army as a member of the 1st Battalion, 75th Ranger Regiment. Deployed to the Middle East, he bravely served his country and returned to the United States with an Honorable Medical Discharge.

After his tenure in the Army, Kassig attended Hanover College and Butler University. During this time, he also trained as an Emergency Medical Technician. In 2012, after seeing the suffering of Syrian refugees in Lebanon, he left higher education to use his medical training by providing humanitarian aid to those affected by the ongoing conflict in Syria. He founded a non-profit, Special Emergency Response Assistance (SERA), to provide Syrian refugees with medical supplies, medical assistance, clothing and food. Kassig also taught trauma care skills to others and thus spread his knowledge and good works to countless people.

The compassion and selflessness that Kassig displayed is an inspiration to his fellow Hoosiers and everyone who dreams of a more peaceful world. The danger he faced did nothing to temper his resolve to help those who needed it most. Kassig and SERA were dedicated to providing acute logistical support and assistance in areas too difficult for other humanitarian organizations to effectively operate.

Abdul-Rahman Peter Edward Kassig will be remembered as a young man of tremendous courage and integrity by family and friends from Indiana and across the globe. I join people of all faiths in praying for the comfort of those who mourn his death and a more peaceful world for all to live in.

HONORING REVEREND THADDEUS  
J. WILLIAMS**HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON**

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, December 10, 2014*

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Reverend Thaddeus J. Williams, a native of Yazoo City, Mississippi.

Reverend Thaddeus J. Williams is married to the former Teresa L. Buckner and the father to four children: Sam, Dante, Philip, and Alexandria. He is a Licensed and Ordained Minister of the Gospel and currently serves as Minister of Membership Assimilation at Greater Fairview Baptist Church.

Reverend Williams is currently enrolled in Mississippi Baptist Seminary and Bible College pursuing a Master in Christian Education. He earned a B.S. degree in Business Administration from Mississippi Valley State University in 1987 and a Master of Public Administration from the University of Mississippi in 1991. He is a graduate of the Mississippi Certified Public Manager Program, the John C. Stennis Institute of Government, Leadership Yazoo City's Inaugural Class in 1992, and the 2008